

REMARKS

Claims 1-7 and 11 were previously pending and under consideration. By means of the present amendment, claim 11 has been canceled and its limitations incorporated into claim 1. Upon entry of this amendment, claims 1-7 will be pending in the above-identified application.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1, 2, 3 and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kobayashi (JP 2002-318556) in view of Sakaguchi et al. (US 6,336,016). Claims 4, 5 and 7 were rejected as being unpatentable over Kobayashi in view of Sakaguchi et al. and in further view of Hosokawa et al. (US 6,280,861). Claim 11 was found to be allowable if incorporated into independent claim 1, from which it depended. Accordingly, it is submitted that the rejection has been overcome by the present amendment.

Conclusion

As Applicants believe the application is in condition for allowance, a favorable action and a Notice of Allowance are respectfully requested.

Applicants believe there is no fee due at this time. However, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to deduct any deficiency or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 19-3140.

If the Examiner desires, Applicants welcome a telephone interview to expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

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